

Best Birding Spots: Part 4

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Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club
Club des naturalistes d'Ottawa

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Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club
Club des naturalistes d'Ottawa

— Founded 1863 (current incorporation 1879) —

Diane Lepage, President

Objectives of the Club: To promote the appreciation, preservation, and conservation of Canada's natural heritage; to encourage investigation and publish the results of research in all fields of natural history and to diffuse the information on these fields as widely as possible; to support and co-operate with organizations engaged in preserving, maintaining or restoring environments of high quality for living things.

Club Publications: *The Canadian Field-Naturalist*, a peer-reviewed science quarterly devoted to reporting research in all fields of natural history relevant to Canada, and *Trail & Landscape*, a quarterly journal/newsletter providing articles on the natural history of the Ottawa Valley and on Club activities.

Field Trips, Lectures and other natural history activities are arranged for members; see "Coming Events" in this issue.

Annual Membership Fees: Individual \$40

Family \$45

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Hard copy of *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* for OFNC members: \$30 per year (volume)

Subscriptions to *Trail & Landscape* for libraries and institutions: \$40 per year (volume)

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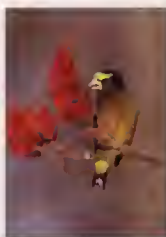
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Views expressed in *Trail & Landscape* are not necessarily those of the OFNC.



On the cover:

A male Evening Grosbeak eating Staghorn Sumac seeds near Casselman on November 30, 2012.

Photo by Jacques Bouvier.

See "How to Find 250 Bird Species in the OFNC Study Area in a Single Year, Part 4" on page 230.

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Photo by A. Bélair

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Welcome New Members

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Carol Brown
Morley Brownstein & Family
Allan Caughey
Corinna Chaudhary & Family
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Sami J. Zeitouni

Ontario

Carolyn Czartorski
Ivars Kops

Québec

Catherine Jarjour

Henry Steger
Chair, Membership Committee
August 2018 🦉

*Enjoying the
beautiful day!
OFNC members
stop for a snack
and rest during
Owen Clarkin's
(standing, right)
tour of the
Garry Fen near
Alexandria,
Ontario, on
August 25, 2018.
Photo by
Diane Lepage.*



Call for Award Nominations

OFNC Awards Committee



The OFNC is looking for nominations for individuals or groups (members and, in several cases, even non-members) who, by virtue of their efforts and talents in support of the Club or natural history appreciation and conservation, are deserving of special recognition. There are seven categories; for more details, see ofnc.ca/about-ofnc/awards.

The deadline to submit nominations is **November 30**.

If you would like to nominate someone for an award, please send an email to the Chair of the Awards Committee at ofnc@ofnc.ca containing the requisite supporting information (type of award, name of nominee, and reasons for nomination that support the award criteria) as well as your name and phone number. Nominate as many individuals as you wish, but be sure to give your reasons. If necessary, the Awards Committee may seek out more information on individuals nominated.



Certificates and George McGee Service Award trophy at Awards Night 2018. Photo by Colin Freebury.

OFNC Awards and brief criteria:

Honorary Membership: In recognition of outstanding contributions by a member, or non-member, to Canadian natural history or to the successful operation of the Club.

Member of the Year: In recognition of the member judged to have contributed the most to the Club in the previous year.

George McGee Service Award: In recognition of a member or members who has or have contributed significantly to the smooth running of the Club over several years.

Conservation Award – OFNC Member:

In recognition of an outstanding contribution by a member or group of members in the cause of natural history conservation in the Ottawa Valley, with particular emphasis on activities within the OFNC's study area (within 50 km of the Peace Tower in Ottawa).

Conservation Award – Non-member: In recognition of an outstanding contribution by a non-member or group of non-members in the cause of natural history conservation in the Ottawa Valley, with particular emphasis on activities within the OFNC's study area (within 50 km of the Peace Tower in Ottawa).

Anne Hanes Natural History Award: In recognition of a member who, through independent study or investigation, has made a worthwhile contribution to our knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the natural history of the Ottawa Valley. The award is designed to recognize work that is done by amateur naturalists.

Mary Stuart Education Award: For members, non-members or organizations, in recognition of outstanding achievements in the field of natural history education in the Ottawa Valley. Potential recipients could include both professional and volunteer museum personnel, biology teachers, talented and dedicated field trip leaders, authors popularizing local natural history, and other educators of children or adults.

To see the list of past winners, visit ofnc.ca/about-ofnc/awards, and click on "Past recipients" under each category. 🐾



*Fashion statement
at the 2018
Awards Night!
Ted Lukaszewski,
left, receives the
runner-up prize for
the photo contest
from David Wray.
(Striped shirt and
black vest not
mandatory!)
Photo by
Colin Freebury.*

Save the date:

The **2019 OFNC Awards Night** will be held on
Saturday, February 23, 2019, at 7:00 p.m.

St. Basil's Parish Church, 940 Rex Avenue, Ottawa.

More information will be provided in the first issue of
Trail & Landscape in 2019.

The **Early Days** and **Landscapes** of **James** **Fletcher**

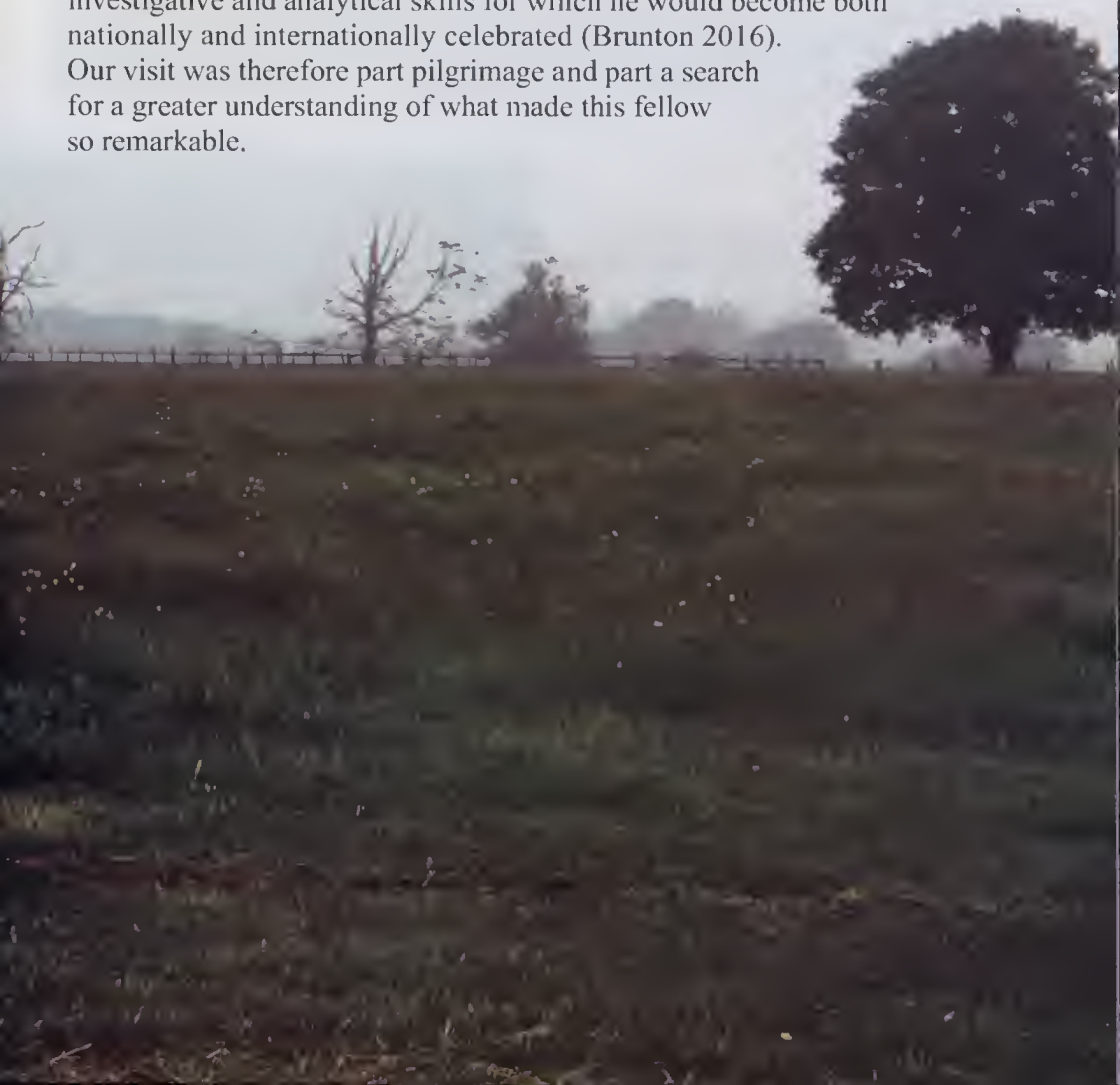
Daniel F. Brunton



*Figure 1. Looking westward toward Ridley across the Home Field of the
Fletchers' Rand's House estate. Photo by K. L. McIntosh; May 28, 2018.*

Most communities put a premium on knowing about and visiting the birthplaces of their famous people. Sometimes this is cultural voyeurism, but it can also be much more than that. Appreciating the sight, geography and structure of such landscapes can often provide insight into the foundation upon which a remarkable record of achievement was based. It is hope of the latter and recognition of a bit of the former that found my wife, Karen McIntosh, and I in southern England in late May 2018, gazing across a misty, rain-soaked field and the adjacent ancient oak woods (Figure 1) that formed the Victorian home base of pioneer naturalist and OFNC founder James Fletcher (1852-1908) (Reddoch 1976, Brunton 2004, Riegert 2018).

Remarkably, these fields and woods, only 40 km southeast of London in Kent, are virtually unchanged from Fletcher's days here in the 1850s and 1860s. It was in this landscape, during the first 20 years of his life, that he discovered his interest in nature and began to develop the extraordinary investigative and analytical skills for which he would become both nationally and internationally celebrated (Brunton 2016). Our visit was therefore part pilgrimage and part a search for a greater understanding of what made this fellow so remarkable.



James Fletcher was born in the oddly named hamlet of Hodsoll Street in the Parish of Ash (on the boundary with Ridley Parish) on March 28, 1852. He lived on the prosperous Fletcher farm estate established 50 years earlier by his great-great-uncle, James Fletcher Senior (1766-1854). Being at least 80 acres in size by the 1840s (Proudfoot 1970s), this was one of the largest estates in the parish at that time. The rolling fields of Kent were heavily agricultural and produced a wide variety of crops. The chalk-based and clay-topped landscape was, however, particularly ideal for growing high-value hops, which were prized by breweries throughout England. Once called “the Mother of all Hop Grounds”, Kent produced 60% of the United Kingdom’s hops throughout the last half of the 19th century (Tann 2005).

Farming in Kent was, and still is, conducted within irregularly shaped, individually named (!) stone- and hedge-fenced fields of great antiquity. The shapes of many of the fields in Fletcher’s neighbourhood within what is clumsily named Ash cum Ridley Parish (the 1500 ha combined Church of England Parishes of Ash and Ridley) remain essentially unchanged from their depiction on late 18th-century maps (Figure 2). The wide hedgerows between these fields and the ample woodlands in the intervening valley bottoms still support a diversity of forested and meadow habitats. It required little effort for us, standing at the edge of the Fletchers’ formally-named Home Field last May and looking across the remnants of The Home Field Woods through which he hiked on his way to church and (probably) school, to see how all this could inspire and nurture an awareness and appreciation of the natural world in the young James.



Figure 2.
 Left: Fletcher estate field boundaries and names in 1792;
 Right: 1792 relatively intact field boundaries superimposed over modern satellite
 imagery. (GoogleEarth, May 4, 2018.)



Figure 3. *Holywell Park (Rand's House), the Fletcher family's former manor on Hodsoll Street, Sevenoaks, Kent.*
Photo by D. F. Brunton, May 28, 2018.

The centre of the Fletcher family world was Rand's House, a large brick and stone farm house (a manor house in all but name) that had been substantially enlarged by James Fletcher Senior in the early 1800s. It is presently a retirement home called Holywell Park (Figure 3). James Senior never married but, remarkably, filled the house with the large and ever-growing families of nephews and great-nephews and even adopted some of them while their parents were still alive, presumably to simplify property inheritance.

One of James Fletcher Senior's great-nephews was Joseph Flitcroft Fletcher (1816-1899), who was identified in 1848 electoral roles as a "gentleman" (Proudfoot 1970s). This indicated that he was a property owner and did not generate income by personally doing farm labour. Joseph Flitcroft and his wife Mary Ann (18[?]-1893) produced a great deal more than hops, various grains, apples and livestock. They also added three sons and four daughters to the Fletcher clan between 1848 and 1855 and apparently adopted the son of one of Joseph Flitcroft's brothers upon his wife's death (likely in childbirth). The second son and fourth child of this large assemblage was *our* James. He presumably was named in honour of the now elderly family benefactor James Fletcher Senior who died two years later.

Our James Fletcher likely was not born in Rand's House but in one of the cluster of (still standing) stone residences within the larger Fletcher estate, about 200 m to the south along Hodsoll Street. Here, his father was reported to be living in 1851 with a "young and growing family" (Proudfoot 1970s). All of the Fletcher family gravitated about the big house, however, and the younger James would have spent much of his youth there. It also seems likely that he resided in the big house in the mid-to-late 1860s about the time he was completing his schooling (Proudfoot 1970s).



Figure 4. *A typically narrow two-way “main” road bordered with high hedges in the Hodsoll Street area, much as it was in James Fletcher’s time.*

Photo by D. F. Brunton, May 28, 2018.

To refer to Hodsoll Street as a hamlet is almost an exaggeration. It remains today largely as it was in Fletcher’s time: a collection of farm houses, barns and hop kilns (known as Oast Houses) strung along a single narrow lane through sparsely inhabited agricultural land. The peak 19th-century population of Ridley Parish, for example, occurred in 1861 and amounted to only 101 people (Kent Archaeological Society 2011A). Hodsoll Street was, like a frightfully large proportion of roads in this part of Kent remain, a seemingly impossibly narrow passageway between high hedges (Figure 4). Clearly, people were pedestrian-oriented in James’s day and did not move about at fast speeds. So it begs the question, where did James and his siblings go to school?

There was a local one-room, thatched-roof “free school” (what we would call a public school) within easy walking distance (about 1.9 km) west of Hodsoll Street at the wonderfully named hamlet/crossroads of Berry’s Maple (Muller 1965). It was reportedly run by a one-legged ex-sailor! Its primary mandate was to serve the children of the poor – presumably those who could spare the time from work to attend. That is unlikely to have applied to the Fletcher boys of Rand’s House. There was also reported to be a school associated with St. Peter’s Ridley Church, directly across the fields of the Fletcher property and where the boys may have attended Sunday School (Figure 5). It is also closer (1.2 km) than the Berry’s Maple school. Little is known of the evidently very small church school other than it was operational, presumably in the church building, between 1849 and the early 1880s (Muller 1965). The Fletchers were deeply involved with local Church of

England affairs. James Senior had financed the building of a vestry in the main parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul in Ash (3 km away). James's uncle, Amos James Fletcher (1806-1876), who inherited the role of head of the household in 1854, commissioned commemorative windows in the chapel there (Proudfoot 1970s) and several Fletchers also held formal roles such as wardens (PPC Secretary 2008).



Figure 5. *St. Peter's Ridley Church, the closest Church of England to Rand's House and likely site of James Fletcher's elementary grade schooling. Photo by K. L. McIntosh, May 28, 2018.*

Assuming it was of sufficient educational quality, the boys would most likely have attended the Ridley church school (Figure 5). If it was not up to an acceptable educational (or social?) standard, however, the boys could well have been home-schooled at Rand's House through what we would now call the elementary grades. Suzanne Fletcher (dates unknown), a first cousin of Joseph Flitcroft and identified in 1871 as living near Hodson Street and having been "for many years a school mistress" (Proudfoot 1970s), might well have been able to fulfill that function. As it is not evident that a "suitable" girls' school existed anywhere in Ash or Ridley Parishes in the mid-1800s (Muller 1965), home schooling was presumably the only educational opportunity for Fletcher's three sisters, in any event.

Most of James's siblings and cousins ultimately remained involved in agriculture either in England or in the colonies. At least one younger brother, Frederick, and a sister were actively involved in agriculture in India in some capacity about the turn of the century (*The Ottawa Citizen*, November 10, 1908). Still, the family appeared to value the benefits of a broad-based, liberal education for at least some of its members. Beyond the early elementary years, the younger James, his older brother Flitcroft (1848-1884), younger brother Frederick Ernest (1854->1904) and adopted brother Franklyn Haward (1862-1918) all attended the prestigious private King's School (for boys), 13 km away at Rochester Cathedral (Cleave-Warne and Partridge 1904).

King's School of Rochester Cathedral is a venerable institution, established in 604 AD and reputed to be the second oldest independent school in the world (Anonymous 2018). It was reconstituted in 1541 by King Henry VIII during his establishment of the Church of England. In the mid-1800s, the school was run by a close associate of Rochester's most famous resident, Charles Dickens. Principal Robert Whiston also shared and espoused that author's then controversially liberal social views. That James Fletcher was very active in social (especially church-based) causes throughout his adult life – running Sunday Schools, being a parish representative to Anglican synods, participating in Christian-based sporting ventures, and so on (Harrington 1909) – presumably results at least in part from the influence of his days at the socially progressive King's School.

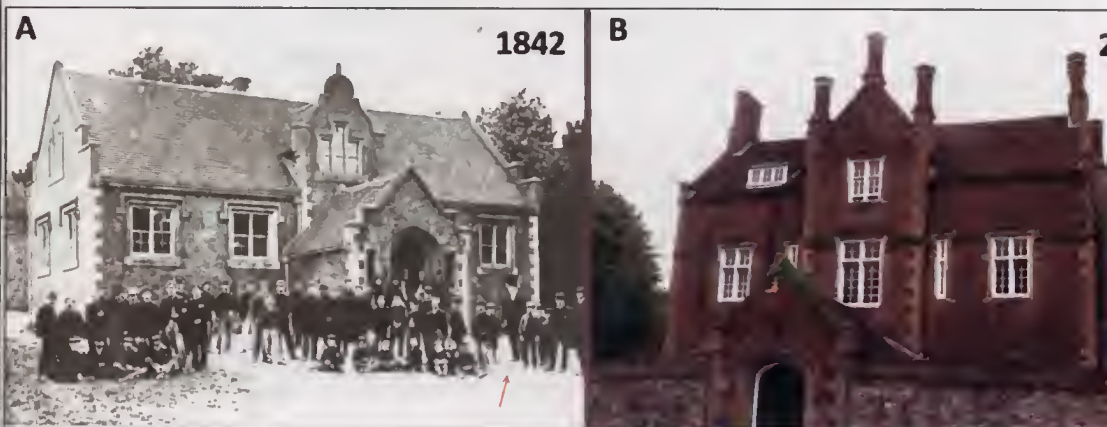
King's School was clearly prestigious: a former Prime Minister of New Zealand and various senior military figures were classmates of James Fletcher (Cleave-Warne and Partridge 1904). Putting four young men through such a school would not have been inexpensive. James Flitcroft appears to have been a wealthy man at least later in life, however, despite not being the head of the family estate. Upon his death in 1899, his personal estate was valued at the modern equivalent of Can\$11-12 million (Anonymous 1899). None of the other Fletcher cousins are recorded as having attended King's School, which was also not then open to girls. Was such education perhaps seen as unnecessary at that time for the other young Fletcher boys who were committing to agricultural careers?

James Fletcher is listed in the school register as first attending in 1865 at age 13, and presumably studied there for at least four years, like his brother Flitcroft who attended from 1860 to 1864 (Cleave-Warne and Partridge 1904). The Fletcher boys apparently did well and prospered from their training at King's School. Former Agriculture Canada research scientist Ibra Connors (pers. comm., 1986) reported that a small book on gardening awarded to Fletcher for excellence in Latin studies at King's School was in the library of the Central Experimental Farm's Plant Research Institute. Flitcroft went on to a short but distinguished artistic career, with at least five paintings retained in the British National Collection (Wood 1978). Frederick was designated a King's Scholar during his 1868-1873 attendance, an honour assigned only to students of exceptional ability (Kings' Rochester 2017).

Figure 6A: *The original Main School, King's School Rochester in 1842 (Principal Robert Whiston at right in top hat) (image courtesy of Brian Nolan, King's School);*

Figure 6B: *the original Main School building, King's School Rochester today.*

Photo by D. F. Brunton, May 29, 2018.



After considerable searching this past May across the much enlarged campus of King's School, still located by the cathedral in the heart of delightful, medieval Rochester, we came upon the original King's School building in which James had attended classes. It is greatly changed today, being enlarged both upwards and outwards (Figures 6A and 6B). The building likely was already too small in its original form to accommodate its growing population through the 1860s and certainly would not have a residential capacity. The Fletcher boys would undoubtedly have boarded in town during school weeks, coming home perhaps for weekends and holidays. A now-manicured park adjacent to the school known as The Vines was the sports field of the school in Fletcher's time and would have been where he exercised his passion for athletics in general and rugby in particular (Harrington 1909, Brunton 2004).

Walking along the virtually unchanged and mostly medieval cobblestone streets around the old cathedral, it was not difficult for us to appreciate the lay of the land of Fletcher's day (Figure 7). And standing before his school, it was easy to imagine James in one of his classes here first learning of the unification of the British North American colonies into a new country. Could such news have sparked the idea of adventure and greater opportunities there for a young man filled with Victorian Christian fervour and "endowed with unusual physical and mental vigour" (Harrington 1909)?



Figure 7. *The streets around downtown Rochester near the cathedral are virtually unchanged from Fletcher's day; Photo by D. F. Brunton, May 29, 2018.*

We don't know how Fletcher occupied himself upon graduating from King's School in 1868-69. Presumably he returned to the family farming business and perhaps, in light of his subsequent first career, managed the account books for the family enterprise. In any event, in 1871, at the age of 19, he obtained employment with the Bank of British North America in London as a clerk (Riegert 2018). It was his association with this bank that brought him to Canada in 1874 and the rest, as they say, is history (Figure 8).

It is tempting to speculate on his activities during the two- (three-?) year hiatus between the end of his schooling and full-time employment in London. The school had introduced him to Latin and probably Greek and hence made much of the technical literature of natural sciences in that time accessible to him. If not receiving training in techniques for scientific research and investigation, he would have been introduced to the process by which one would determine such things. It seems unlikely, however, that he had a naturalist mentor in the sparsely settled, agricultural community of Ash cum Ridley,



Figure 8. *James Fletcher (age 24) demonstrating his "Victorian vigour" in a posed photo for the family back in Kent, celebrating the wilderness character of Canada; this is the earliest known image of him.*
Photo by W. Notman, 1876, McCord Museum #II-43358.1.

and we found no mention of such a person. If he indeed had two or three years as a single, physically vigorous young man with a budding interest in the natural sciences and time on his hands, what better place than the fields and woodlands of Ash and Ridley in which to spend them and hone his naturalist skills? His good friend, Will Harrington, stated that Fletcher arrived in Ottawa as an already accomplished field entomologist (Harrington 1909), so he clearly had developed a certain level of expertise in the Old World.

We finished our “Fletcher ramble” that day by visiting the St. Peter and St. Paul Church of England in Ash along the western edge of the Ash cum Ridley Parish. This is the burial place of the Fletchers. A tumbledown, overgrown graveyard right out of an old English movie dominates the yard adjacent to the historic stone church building (Figure 9) which is set amongst oak woodlands that were already old in James Fletcher’s day. The tombstones in the old section of the graveyard are lichen-encrusted, eroded and frequently barely legible.



Figure 9. *St. Peter and St. Paul Church (Ash cum Ridley Parish) and graveyard (note overhanging Red Oak on the left). Photo by K. L. McIntosh, May 28, 2018.*

After considerable searching and with the aid of partial documentation, we found the Fletcher family grave markers and their just-legible lettering (Figure 10). We could read the names of his great-great-grandparents but could not determine if this also was the grave



Figure 10. *Worn tombstones on overgrown Fletcher family grave. Photo by K. L. McIntosh, May 28, 2018.*

of his parents (unlikely) and various uncles and aunts. Some of them at least are reported to be there but we could not make out other names on those worn stones. Just the same, standing in that soft rain amidst the monuments to his ancestors by the lovely old parish church in which he was baptised and which he attended regularly, and surrounded by woodlands ringing with the same chaffinch, robin and blackbird songs that Fletcher would have heard there, made it all seem quite close. What a grand place to wrap up our quest.

And that's when we saw the tree!

It is an old Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*) that towers over the path leading to the main door of the church, not far from the Fletcher family graves. It is well over a century in age, judging by its girth (Figure 11). By 1724 this North American species had been planted experimentally in the United Kingdom to assess its (poor) potential as a timber tree there and later for ornamental purposes (Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland 2008). It is now so successfully established in Europe that it has become invasive in some parts (Major et al. 2013). In England, it was only commonly planted after 1920 and so is not so troublesome. It would probably have been only uncommon or even rare in Victorian Kent, however, particularly so in such a remote church yard. So this begs the question... could James Fletcher have had a hand in the establishment of this venerable North American tree at a site that was so personally important to him?



Figure 11. The author by Fletcher's (?) Red Oak, St. Peter and St. Paul Church (Fletcher family grave by arrow, back left). Photo by K. L. McIntosh, May 28, 2018.

It turns out that Fletcher had one of his few return visits to England between February and late May 1886. He was there to help prepare the Canadian exhibits at the upcoming Colonial and Indian Exhibition and lived with his parents in Kent for those 3½ months. Fletcher's primary responsibility at the Colonial Exhibition was to set up the demonstration Horticultural and Botanical Garden in the Canada Court (Anonymous 1886). To do this, Fletcher would have to have transported seed as well as living examples of hardy Canadian plants with him to England. And forestry was the primary non-agricultural biological theme in the Canadian exhibit. So – could the grand old tree in the Ash cemetery have been planted there 130 years ago by James Fletcher? Could he have placed it there as a living tribute to his ancestral and naturalist roots from the plant collection – almost certainly originating in Ottawa – brought to England for the Colonial Exhibition?

We can't know for certain but that is both a plausible and most desirable explanation. And it would also be a fitting final piece of the new appreciation and understanding we had gained about the nature and commitment of this son of a Kent hop farmer who went on to become arguably Canada's most significant Victorian-era field naturalist. 🐾

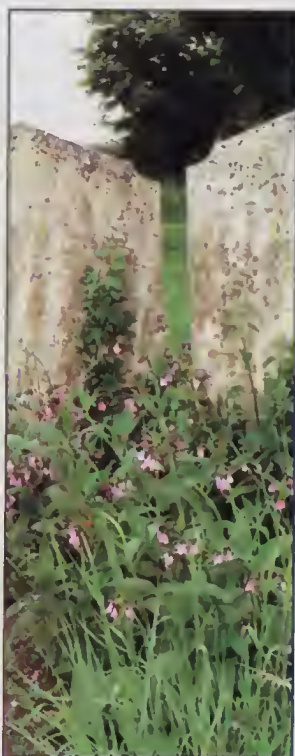
Acknowledgements

My thanks to Karen McIntosh for her keen-eyed help with these searches and for making our discoveries possible by successfully navigating the insanely narrow and ancient Kentish "highways" of Fletcher's neighbourhood. A great deal of important background information on the Fletchers was gathered on-site in the 1980s by the late Harry Catling; his efforts inspired our visit all these years later. King's School archivist Brian Nolan of Rochester, England similarly provided invaluable information on both the workings of that venerable institution and the scholastic records of the Fletcher boys. Our thanks, too, to the on-site manager of Holywell Park for permitting an inside and outside visit to James Fletcher's Rand's House home on Hodsoll Street on May 28, 2018. Holly Bickerton's review of the draft of this article was very helpful and that effort is also appreciated.

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2018 Spring Migration Monitoring Program at Innis Point Bird Observatory

Donna Talluto

The OFNC donated \$4,500 to the Innis Point Bird Observatory to help hire a bander-in-charge for the 2018 Spring Migration Monitoring Program; this report was a requirement of the agreement.



*Rusty Blackbird banded by Alanah Bonvie.
Photo by Donna Talluto.*

I was really grateful to work as the bander-in-charge (BIC) at Innis Point Bird Observatory (IPBO) this spring.

IPBO is part of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network and has been monitoring the spring migration since 1996. The 2018 Spring Migration Monitoring Program (SMMP) took place from April 24 to June 7. The daily protocol included a seven-hour counting period in the delimited area, a one-hour census following a specific route in this area, and a session of bird banding by mist-netting. Bird banding is dependent on the weather conditions and the number of staff present. There are 20 nets in seven separate clusters. The nets are opened a half-hour before sunrise and for a maximum of six hours. At the end of the day, we combine information from general observations, censuses, banding, and recapture to obtain an estimated daily total (EDT) for each species.

This year, 150 species of birds were documented during the count period, and we banded 1,565 individuals of 77 species during SMMP¹. We also had 85 birds of 24 species returning² from previous years. It was a good year at IPBO if we compare it with other years, especially with those years when there was considerable flooding. This year, we closed only a few nets during one week because of the high water levels.

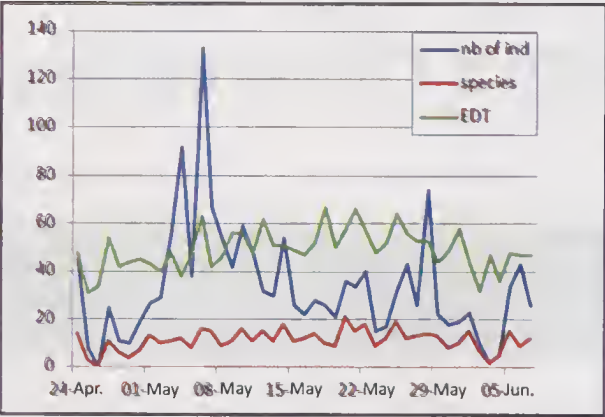


Figure 1. *Estimated Daily Total (EDT) based on numbers of bird banded and counting sessions.*

The highest number of birds banded was 133 on May 6, which included 33 Cedar Waxwings (Figure 1). The highest diversity of birds banded was 21 species on May 20, while the highest diversity for EDT was 67 species on May 18. On average, we banded 34 birds of 11 species per day, and the EDT mean was 49 per day. There was only one day, on April 26, where we didn't open the nets because of the weather.

The highlights of this year were a Rusty Blackbird seen for the first time April 27, then banded on April 30; one Bohemian Waxwing seen with a large flock of Cedar Waxwings on April 30; a Carolina Wren heard and seen in late morning on May 1 and banded on early the next morning; a Mourning Warbler first seen and banded on May 20; and a Canada Warbler seen on May 18 and banded on June 3. We also caught a Ruby-throated Hummingbird, but we don't band this species anymore at IPBO.

The birds most frequently banded were the warblers, who represented 47% of the birds banded, followed by the Cedar Waxwings (20%). We've banded only a few chickadees this year (14 individuals, which represented 1% of the birds banded) (Figure 2 and Table 1).

Figure 2. *Number of birds banded.*

Group of birds	Species	Individuals
Warblers	22	718
Cedar Waxwing	1	319
Others	27	146
Sparrows, Buntings and Junco	11	120
Mimic birds	2	68
Woodpeckers	4	62
Blackbirds	3	61
Flycatchers	6	57
Black-capped Chickadee	1	14

¹ Including 12 more individuals banded outside SMMP.
² A return is a bird that has not been seen more than 3 months ago.

We've recaptured 207 individuals of 29 species. Most of the recaptured birds were Song Sparrows (47) and Black-capped Chickadees (34) (Table 2). Waterbirds were active in April and early May. We banded 3 Spotted Sandpipers and we've observed species like White-winged Scoter, Whimbrel and Great Egret. We've also observed raptors including Ospreys nesting in the area, a Short-eared Owl seen April 27 and a late Snowy Owl seen on May 1!

Table 1: Summary of the birds banded in SMMP 2018
 (Including the birds banded on April 21 and birds banded after standard hours)
 (Note from the editor: I did not update the bird names in cases where old bird names were used in the table, since the codes used by IPBO correspond to these old bird names.)

	Species Banded	Code	Number of Individuals
1	Myrtle Warbler	MYWA	339
2	Cedar Waxwing	CEDW	319
3	American Redstart	AMRE	109
4	Yellow Warbler	YEWa	90
5	Song Sparrow	SOSP	65
6	Gray Catbird	GRCA	48
7	Downy Woodpecker	DOWO	47
8	Red-winged Blackbird	RWBL	32
9	Western Palm Warbler	WPWA	30
10	White-throated Sparrow	WTSP	29
11	American Goldfinch	AMGO	28
12	Common Grackle	COGR	28
13	Chestnut-sided Warbler	CSWA	28
14	Common Yellowthroat	COYE	22
15	Brown Thrasher	BRTH	20
16	Wilson's Warbler	WIWA	20
17	Black-and-white Warbler	BAWW	19
18	Red-eyed Vireo	REVI	19
19	Traill's Flycatcher	TRFL	19
20	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	RCKI	17
21	Black-capped Chickadee	BCCH	14
22	Eastern Phoebe	EAPH	14
23	Blackpoll Warbler	BLPW	12
24	Northern Waterthrush	NOWA	10
25	Tree Swallow	TRES	10
26	Yellow-shafted Flicker	YSFL	10
27	Nashville Warbler	NAWA	9
28	Tennessee Warbler	TEWA	9
29	Veery	VEER	9
30	Blue Jay	BLJA	8
31	Great Crested Flycatcher	GCFL	8
32	Least Flycatcher	LEFL	8
33	Chipping Sparrow	CHSP	7
34	Magnolia Warbler	MAWA	7
35	American Robin	AMRO	6

Table 1, Continued: Summary of the birds banded in SMMP 2018.

(Including the birds banded on April 21 and birds banded after standard hours)

(Note from the editor: I did not update the bird names in cases where old bird names were used in the table, since the codes used by IPBO correspond to these old bird names.)

	Species Banded	Code	Number of Individuals
36	Swamp Sparrow	SWSP	6
37	Purple Finch	PUFI	5
38	Warbling Vireo	WAVI	5
39	Baltimore Oriole	BAOR	4
40	Hairy Woodpecker	HAWO	4
41	Northern Cardinal	NOCA	4
42	Orange-crowned Warbler	OCWA	4
43	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	YBFL	4
44	Barn Swallow	BARS	3
45	Cliff Swallow	CLSW	3
46	Eastern Wood-Pewee	EAWP	3
47	Field Sparrow	FISP	3
48	Golden-crowned Kinglet	GCKI	3
49	Indigo Bunting	INBU	3
50	Northern Parula	NOPA	3
51	Ovenbird	OVEN	3
52	Spotted Sandpiper	SPSA	3
53	Wood Thrush	WOTH	3
54	American Tree Sparrow	ATSP	2
55	House Wren	HOWR	2
56	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	RBGR	2
57	Scarlet Tanager	SCTA	2
58	Swainson's Thrush	SWTH	2
59	Bay-breasted Warbler	BBWA	1
60	Belted Kingfisher	BEKI	1
61	Blackburnian Warbler	BLBW	1
62	Black-throated Blue Warbler	BTBW	1
63	Black-throated Green Warbler	BTNW	1
64	Carolina Wren	CARW	1
65	Canada Warbler	CAWA	1
66	Cape May Warbler	CMWA	1
67	Eastern Kingbird	EAKI	1
68	Lincoln Sparrow	LISP	1
69	Mourning Dove	MODO	1
70	Mourning Warbler	MOWA	1
71	Philadelphia Vireo	PHVI	1
72	Red-breasted Nuthatch	RBNU	1
73	Savannah Sparrow	SAVS	1
74	Slate-colored Junco	SCJU	1
75	White-crowned Sparrow	WCSP	2
76	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	YBSA	1
77	Rusty Blackbird	RUBL	1

Table 2: Summary of the birds recaptured in SMMP 2018

(Including the birds banded on April 21 and birds banded after standard hours)

(Note from the editor: I did not update the bird names in cases where old bird names were used in the table, since the codes used by IPBO correspond to these old bird names.)

	Species Recaptured	Code	Number of Individuals
1	Song Sparrow	SOSP	47
2	Black-capped Chickadee	BCCH	34
3	Yellow Warbler	YEW	17
4	Grey Catbird	GRCA	15
5	White-throated Sparrow	WTSP	14
6	American Redstart	AMRE	12
7	Veery	VEER	11
8	Chestnut-sided Warbler	CSWA	8
9	Brown Thrasher	BRTH	5
10	Black-and-white Warbler	BAWW	4
11	Common Yellowthroat	COYE	4
12	Great Crested Flycatcher	GCFL	4
13	House Wren	HOWR	4
14	White-breasted Nuthatch	WBNU	4
15	Red-eyed Vireo	REVI	3
16	American Goldfinch	AMGO	2
17	American Robin	AMRO	2
18	Downy Woodpecker	DOWO	2
19	Hairy Woodpecker	HAWO	2
20	Myrtle Warbler	MYWA	2
21	Purple finch	PUFI	2
22	Red-winged Blackbird	RWBL	2
23	American Tree Sparrow	ATSP	1
24	Blue Jay	BLJA	1
25	Eastern Phoebe	EAPH	1
26	Magnolia Warbler	MAWA	1
27	Tree Swallow	TRES	1
28	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	YBSA	1
29	Yellow-shafted Flicker	YSFL	1

This would not have been possible without the wonderful people who volunteered their time to help run the different projects at Innis Point. It was great to have such a diversity of skills and personalities. Special thanks to Gerhard Bruins and Katie Petrie who both came as interns. I would also thank Celia, Martha and Bill for your trust. Many thanks to all these great people: Willow English, Tanja Schuelers, Alanah Bonvie and her grandmother (who made some new birdbags), Alex Smith, Sophie Roy, Frédéric Bédard, Laurent Bédard, Jac Curry, Mark Davidson, Bob Baker, Janette Niwa, Catherine Jarjour, Juliet and Gabriel McMurren, Michelle Locke, Gillian Shields, Christine Anderson and Chrissy Barton. 🐾



*Female
Belted Kingfisher
by Donna Talluto*

Citizen Science for Wildlife Protection in the Ottawa Valley

Leah Viau

Biodiversity among all species is very important for healthy populations and ecosystems. The construction of roads, however, can pose serious threats to wildlife populations and their health, and therefore there is increasing concern for the effects roads have on wildlife populations. Roads are not only a cause of roadkill, but they also cause habitat loss and fragmentation, create barriers between populations and their access to resources, and pollute wildlife habitats. Many studies have been done to determine how large mammals are impacted by roads and where mitigation is most needed to prevent wildlife-vehicle collisions, but few studies have been conducted to learn of the impacts on smaller wildlife, such as amphibians and reptiles.



*Road Ecology Technician Intern Leah Viau taking notes on a Snapping turtle laying eggs near the road in Gatineau Park in 2016.
Photo by Elena Kreuzberg.*

In 2015, the Ottawa Valley Chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS-OV) launched its “Road Ecology - Citizen Science” project to study how roads impact wildlife. In 2016-2017, this project became more formal when attention was focused on certain roads in the Ottawa Valley with different ecological conditions, and field work was conducted in a more consistent manner. Due to concerns expressed from the community as well as our own curiosity, CPAWS-OV collected data along Roger Stevens Drive, Highway 5 in Gatineau, and selected parkways in Gatineau Park. The main purpose of this project was to build on organizational capacity, engage the

public in citizen science, develop awareness materials, and encourage decision makers to consider landscape connectivity issues in the region. As a result of this two-year study, CPAWS-OV wrote a report to present our findings on the impacts that roads have on wildlife, and to provide options for mitigation measures that are appropriate, especially for smaller animals like amphibians and reptiles.

This two-year study allowed CPAWS-OV to identify problematic areas, also known as hotspots, where wildlife-vehicle collisions occurred most frequently. In order to collect such data, staff and volunteers would survey the roads and record any wildlife observations (live or dead animals), including coordinates and other relevant information. For the most part, a driving survey was conducted, where one person would drive at low speeds while the passenger would actively look for roadkill. If an animal was spotted, the vehicle would be stopped so more specific and accurate information could be obtained. In areas where it was safe to do so, staff and volunteers conducted a survey on foot to more thoroughly scan the road. Since each road represented a different kind of roadway (parkway/highway/freeway), the method changed slightly for each. See Table 1 for results.

Each study area had certain taxa that were more likely to be found crossing the road, and depending on the season, the results would vary. In Gatineau Park and along Roger Stevens Drive, more than 70% of observations were of amphibians in both 2016 and 2017. Along Highway 5, mammals were observed most, making up 58% and 72%, respectively. All data for this study was inputted into Excel spreadsheets and hotspot maps were created using ArcMap. A hotspot in this study was defined as an area of road where animals are found crossing the road most frequently. Highway 5 was the only area of study that did not show any significant hotspots in 2016, and in 2017 one spot was identified. The study areas in Gatineau Park and Roger Stevens Drive both had similar hotspots in each year of study.



Road-killed Blanding's Turtle found on Roger Stevens Drive in 2017. Photo by Elena Kreuzberg.

These findings have been shared with stakeholders responsible for road management, and discussions have been held to explore possible mitigation opportunities. According to this study, mitigation for amphibians and reptiles would be appropriate in both Gatineau Park and on Roger Stevens Drive, with greater emphasis on Roger Stevens Drive. Although more than 70% of findings were of amphibians along Roger Stevens Drive, 10% and 8% of findings for 2016 and 2017 were of turtles. In Ontario, seven of eight Ontario turtle species are considered species at risk, and because turtles have such a low reproductive rate, the removal by roads of just a few turtles can have serious impacts. Suggested mitigation measures for amphibians and reptiles include geo-textile fencing or a more permanent barrier from the road, paired with a box tunnel or arch/round tunnel.

We would like to thank the North American Partnership for Environmental Community in Action (NAPECA) – part of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), the Colleges and Canadian Institutes (CICan) Clean Tech Internship Program, and the City of Ottawa Community Environmental Grant Program for the funding to make this study happen.

For more information on CPAWS-OV’s study, please visit our website at [cpaws-ov-vo.org/](http://cpaws-ov.vo.org/) or email Leah at lviau@cpaws.org.

CPAWS-OV is also proud to announce the release of *Wildlife on Roads: A Handbook* by Kari E. Gunson and Frederick W. Schueler. This book was made in collaboration with CPAWS Ottawa Valley and Eco-Kare International, thanks to funding from the 2013-2014 MNRF SAR Stewardship Fund, and is meant to serve as a handbook for collecting wildlife data along the roads. To order a copy of this book, please contact CPAWS-OV at 819-778-3355 or email Leah at lviau@cpaws.org. 🐸

Table 1. Below is a table summarizing the total number of animals (live and dead) that were found on or alongside the roads in each year of study. These numbers account for mammals, reptiles, amphibians and birds.

	Gatineau Park	Highway 5	Roger Stevens Drive
2016	779	156	1492
2017	663	114	2225

*Red eft found crossing Fortune Lake Parkway in Gatineau Park in 2017.
Photo by Leah Viau.*





Birds of Nunavut: **Discount for OFNC members**

In 2017, the OFNC donated \$10,000 to support the publication of *Birds of Nunavut*. The two-volume set was released in August 2018 and the publisher, UBC Press, is offering a discount to OFNC members:

20% discount on the hardcover set and free shipping within Canada
or

20% discount on the PDF version of the book
or

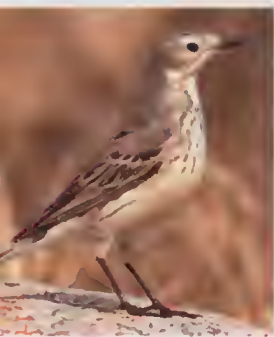
20% discount on the mixed-media product
(hardcover set with free shipping within Canada plus PDF version)

Regular price of the two-volume set is \$125.00 (hardcover or PDF),
or \$150.00 for the mixed media product.

Please visit the UBC Press website at www.ubcpress.ca/birds-of-nunavut
and use the discount code "OFNC" when ordering.

This offer is good until November 15, 2018.

Birds of Nunavut, edited by James M. Richards and Anthony J. Gaston, is the first complete survey of every species of bird known to occur in the territory of Nunavut. The two-volume set documents 295 species of birds (145 of which are known to breed there), presenting a wealth of information on identification, distribution, ecology, behaviour, and conservation. Lavishly illustrated with over 800 colour photographs (showing plumages, nests, eggs, and young for most breeding species) and 145 range maps, it is a visually stunning reference work on the birds that live in and visit Nunavut. It also aims to document the changes that are happening in the Arctic due to climate change and will serve as a guide for future development and conservation efforts, as well as an important benchmark for measuring the effects of climate change.



Volume 1 of this two-volume set contains species accounts for the nonpasserines (from Ducks, Geese, and Swans to Falcons). It also provides an overview of Nunavut's geography and ecology, bird conservation concerns, and the history of the study of birds in the territory. Volume 2 provides species accounts for the passerines (from Tyrant Flycatchers to Cardinals), as well as four appendices (including a species checklist).

Text provided by UBC Press.

Photos: Cover of Volumes 1 and 2 of Birds of Nunavut by UBC Press; American Pipit by Jim Richards.

OFNC Research Grants: Call for Proposals for 2019

OFNC Publications Committee

The OFNC has established a fund to support field-based research activities that reflect and promote the Club's objectives within eastern Ontario or western Quebec, focused particularly upon the Club's study area – inside the 50-km radius from the Peace Tower in Ontario or Quebec.

The objectives of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club are:

- To promote the appreciation, preservation, and conservation of Canada's natural heritage;
- To encourage investigation, publish the results of research in all fields of natural history, and diffuse the information as widely as possible;
- To support and cooperate with organizations engaged in preserving, maintaining or restoring environments of high quality for living things.

**Deadline for
proposal submission:
January 15, 2019**

Available Funding:

It is expected that grants will typically range from \$1000–\$3000.

Eligibility:

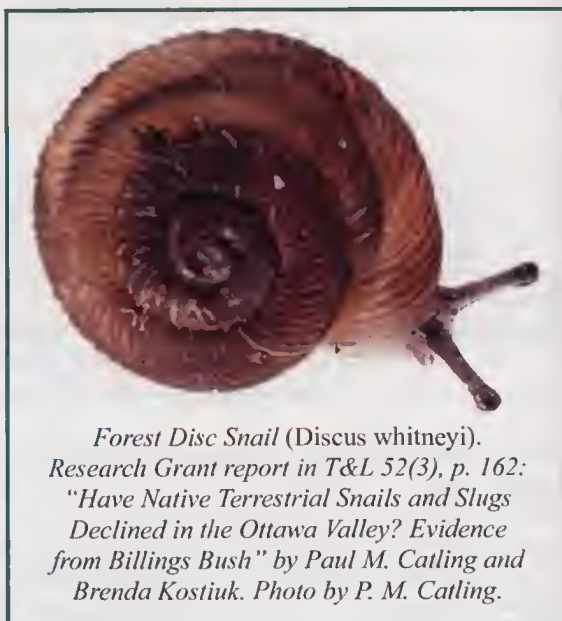
Individuals, including students conducting research for their degrees, postdoctoral fellows, professors, research scientists and independent researchers.

Types of Research Supported:

Research projects must be credibly science-based and with a measureable outcome. Given the Club's focus on natural history, field-based projects are favoured.

Use of Funds:

Grants may be used for legitimate field-related expenses including travel, accommodation, food, equipment and supplies, etc. Grants may not be used for salary. Only a small portion of funds may be used for publication costs and/or laboratory analyses, and this must be justified in the application.



*Forest Disc Snail (Discus whitneyi).
Research Grant report in T&L 52(3), p. 162:
"Have Native Terrestrial Snails and Slugs
Declined in the Ottawa Valley? Evidence
from Billings Bush" by Paul M. Catling and
Brenda Kostiuk. Photo by P. M. Catling.*

Application Process:

To apply for an OFNC research grant, please submit a project proposal with the following information. Maximum two pages.

1. Project title

2. Name(s), affiliation(s) and contact information of primary researcher(s), including supervisor name for students. The applicant(s) should indicate if they are a member of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club or a subscriber to *The Canadian Field-Naturalist*.

3. Project team members

4. Research experience (brief summary of relevant experience)

5. Summary of the proposed research

Describe your research project in plain language. The summary should include and/or address the following:

- Provide a brief background summary of the research topic, its relevance to the local area, and describe the questions the project is addressing.
- How does the research contribute to the objectives of the OFNC?
- Explain the methods by which the work will be conducted, including the site(s) where it will be undertaken.
- Indicate if relevant permits have been or will be obtained/applied for and if any land access permission is required.
- Describe the timeline for the project.
- If your work involves collecting specimens, state where this material will be permanently deposited.

6. Proposed Budget

Provide the following information:

- Amount requested from OFNC.
- Total budget for the project.
- Other sources of funding (if applicable).
- How and when OFNC funds will be used.

7. Submission

Submit your proposal in PDF format by email to: Dr. Jeff Saarela (jsaarela@nature.ca), with "OFNC Research Fund proposal" in the subject line of your message.

Deliverables:

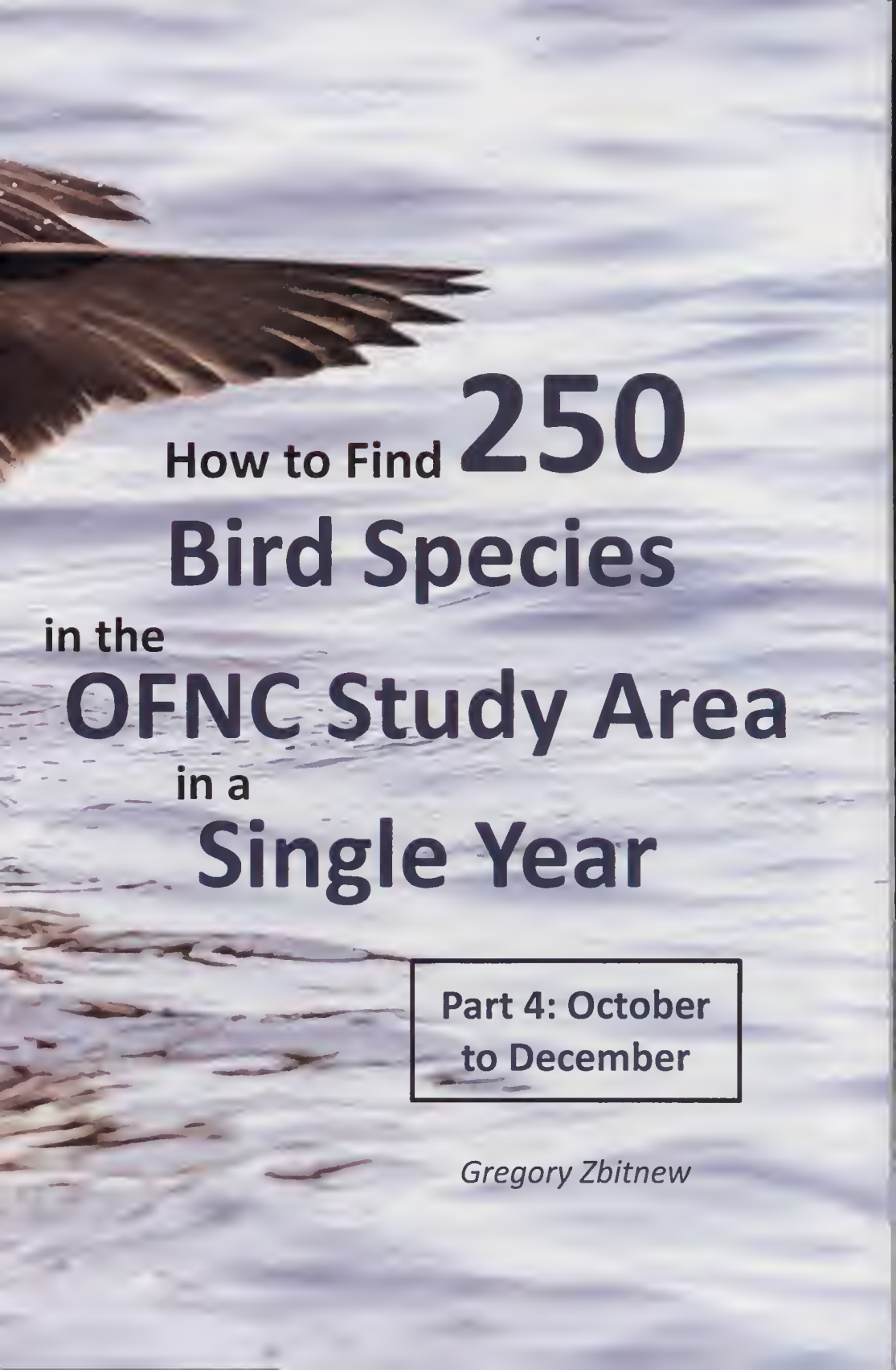
The Club expects research results to be communicated as widely as is pertinent, with submissions to *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* encouraged, if appropriate.

- State how you plan to communicate the results of your research.
- All grantees must provide a plain language summary of their results for publication in *Trail & Landscape* (the Club's quarterly newsletter and local natural history journal that all members receive).
- Grantees may be invited to present a talk about their research at one of the Club's monthly meetings, and to communicate their work on the Club's blog <http://ofnc.ca/news-events/ofnc-blogs>.

Financial support from the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club must be clearly acknowledged in all final documentation. 🐾



*Juvenile female King Eider at Andrew Haydon Park in Ottawa,
November 13, 2013. Photo by Jacques Bouvier.*



How to Find **250**
Bird Species
in the
OFNC Study Area
in a
Single Year

**Part 4: October
to December**

Gregory Zbitnew

CONTENTS OF PART 4

- Introduction
 - How has the year 2018 progressed so far?
 - Key activities during this period
 - Important target birds
 - Catching up on the previous misses
 - Enjoying the fall Songbirds
 - Late Shorebirds
 - Owls
 - The ducks are back
 - Looking for Gulls
 - Fall rarities
 - Return of winter and the winter birds
 - The Christmas Bird Counts
 - Table 1: The Birding Year, Week by Week
 - Table 2: List of all Target Species, by Habitat and Season
 - Closing remarks
-

INTRODUCTION

In 1977, a series of articles in *Trail & Landscape* described a strategy to see 200 bird species within the OFNC study area (which is the circle of a 50-kilometer radius centered on the Peace Tower, also called the 50K) in a single year. This is the last of a series of four articles giving an update/rewrite of that series, and it will describe the key birds and activities for October-December.

By October, active birders will have seen 95% of their tally for the year. The vast majority of SONGBIRDS have left for the season. The main focus of the last few months of the year is on activity on the water.

While it is too late to start a “big year” this year, there are still plenty of birds around, at least in early October, with a lot of potential for rarities, and the new birding year is only months away. If you wanted, you could probably still observe 150 species between now and the end of the year.

All the introductory material in the first three articles (T&L Volume 52, Numbers 1, 2 and 3) is still relevant to this article, so I will summarize only a few key points:

1. Chase a rarity as soon as possible. The rarity *might* stay for weeks, but it is more likely to be gone the next day, or even the next hour.
 2. Take full advantage of the very best birding tool available, which is an online database of bird sightings called eBird (www.ebird.org).
 3. Take advantage of all the birding information on the OFNC website (www.ofnc.ca), such as birding areas and the 1993 OFNC checklist.
 4. Check out any suitable habitat near where you live. Birds are not just found in the well-known hotspots.
-

HOW HAS THE YEAR 2018 PROGRESSED SO FAR?

How has the birding year progressed in 2018, as of “press time” in late July? The tally of species seen in 2018 in the 50K now stands at about 250, with some individual birders having seen more than 220 species so far. Of all the birds on the target lists, 108 have been seen so far, with another 11 likely to be seen in the fall.

Spring was not exceptional for SONGBIRDS, with no real “fallouts”, but SHOREBIRDS put in a strong showing in the spring, partly because of some really good habitat in the east. Then in late July, water levels on the Ottawa River were low, and fall shorebirding got off to a great start. Since late April, there were four species seen which were rarer than those on the target list. An EARED GREBE was the first Ottawa county record. SABINE’S GULL was an exceptional spring sighting at Britannia Point. The other rarities were an AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN and a RED KNOT. There was also a first record for the 50K, a WHITE-WINGED DOVE in the Urbandale area of Ottawa.

KEY ACTIVITIES DURING THIS PERIOD

1. Visit the Ottawa River regularly until freeze-up, but mostly until mid-November, particularly in times of inclement weather.
2. Visit remaining shorebird habitat as long as it lasts.
3. Visit the migrant traps to catch the last SONGBIRDS.
4. Check the area around Trail Road for GULLS.
5. Starting around mid-November particularly, revisit most of the key activities described in Part 1, to catch up on any winter birds that you missed.
5. Participate in some local Christmas Bird Counts.

Brant, Andrew Haydon Park, Ottawa, November 8, 2013. Photo by Jacques Bouvier.



IMPORTANT TARGET BIRDS

The introduction to this section is the same as in Part 3, so it is recommended that you re-read that section. As stated there, the list that follows includes the important birds to target during this period. They almost always occur in our area every year during this time, but are harder to find/easier to miss, so you should focus your efforts on finding these birds, and in the process you will see the more common ones. Even in this list, some are more difficult to find than others, so a * identifies that species as more difficult to find.

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. RED-THROATED LOON | 7. WHITE-WINGED SCOTER |
| 2. BRANT | 8. LONG-TAILED DUCK |
| 3. *EURASIAN WIGEON | 9. RED-BREASTED MERGANSER |
| 4. *CANVASBACK | 10. AMERICAN COOT |
| 5. BLACK SCOTER | 11. *HUDSONIAN GODWIT |
| 6. SURF SCOTER | 12. *PURPLE SANDPIPER |
| | 13. LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL |



CATCHING UP ON PREVIOUS MISSES

This is a list of the target birds mentioned in articles 1-3 that you can still find in October to December. As in the previous list, a * identifies that species as more difficult to find than the others.

Refer to the 1993 OFNC checklist for details on suitable habitat for each species.

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. All the target birds mentioned in Part 1 plus: | 6. *ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER |
| 2. *SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER | 7. LINCOLN'S SPARROW |
| 3. *LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER | 8. FOX SPARROW |
| 4. BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER | 9. *GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH |
| 5. AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER | 10. *NELSON'S SPARROW |
| | 11. RUSTY BLACKBIRD |

Photo: *American Golden-Plovers in Casselman, October 21, 2010, by Jacques Bouvier.*

ENJOYING THE FALL SONGBIRDS

While the vast majority of SONGBIRD species are gone by early October, some SPARROWS are an exception, as they take advantage of the abundant seed crop in the fall. If you missed LINCOLN'S or FOX SPARROW in the spring, look for them in the migrant traps in the first few weeks of October. As mentioned in Part 3, NELSON'S SPARROW is still around in the phragmites from Andrew Haydon Park to Constance Bay for a few weeks in October.



*Golden-crowned Kinglet in Larose forest,
November 8, 2011. Photo by Jacques Bouvier.*

A surprising number of WARBLERS can linger into the first week of October, but the one most likely to have been missed until now that you can still find is ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER, which is still around for the first two weeks of October. Migrant traps are the best bet.

LATE SHOREBIRDS

While many SHOREBIRDS have left by late-September, there is often still a good diversity in early October, and DUNLIN and WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER are at their peak. Of the other species you may have missed, BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER, AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER, HUDSONIAN GODWIT, and LONG-BILLED

A first winter Dunlin in Ottawa, November 8, 2013. Photo by Jacques Bouvier.



DOWITCHER are still around for a few weeks. One special SHOREBIRD to find is PURPLE SANDPIPER, our very latest, which does not peak in population (and this is not much of a peak) until early November. It tends to prefer rocky shoreline, Britannia Pier to Shirley's Bay being the best area, but its main claim to fame is that it tends not to be seen unless the weather is really bad, sometimes with snow and ice. As discussed earlier, SHOREBIRD habitat can be difficult to find sometimes, so refer to the previous articles. In good years, the Ottawa River shore between Ottawa Beach and Shirley's Bay is the best, and the Carp River flood plain is developing into a good alternative.

OWLS

Any of the OWLS you missed until now you can potentially see during this period. Starting about early October, OWLS start migrating, and as mentioned in Part 1, this is the time to stumble upon them outside of their nesting grounds, either with or without the help of SONGBIRDS/CROWS. At this time of the year there also may be a bit of vocalization. The "northern" OWLS also return and may take up residency for the winter. They would be settled in by mid-December, if they are staying.



Hooded Merganser with stickleback in Ottawa, November 8, 2013.

Photo by Jacques Bouvier.

THE DUCKS ARE BACK

WATERBIRD population grows steadily throughout October, and declines slowly through November. The best areas are on the Ottawa River from the Champlain Bridge to Constance Bay, and also from about Masson to Plaisance. Both areas can host thousands of birds at the peak. The two areas tend to have different mixes, although there is more variety in the west. While 95% or more of the birds are gone by late November no matter what the weather is like, the freeze-up drastically reduces the available habitat, and birding then is rapidly restricted to the few unfrozen stretches of water on the rivers. Inland ponds freeze even more rapidly, sometimes overnight.

Land access to the best areas can be problematic. From Champlain Bridge to Shirley's bay, there are a number of fairly convenient places to drive to, then it is a short distance to the river. The main concentration in the west, however, is west of the Shirley's Bay Causeway, which has restricted access and also is a bit of a walk to view the inner bay, which is the best. In the east, from Quebec, the best place is a sheltered bay at Parc national de Plaisance (Baie Noire), but unfortunately the best views require a 1.5-km walk-in. The walk can provide excellent birding, but the reward is at the end where there is a high probability of seeing EURASIAN WIGEON in late September to mid-October, amongst hundreds of AMERICAN WIGEON. These areas in the east are not heavily birded due to the difficulty of access, so there are probably many undiscovered treasures which pass through every year. Parts of this area east of Baie Noire are also outside of the 50K, which is probably another reason they are not often birded.

LOOKING FOR GULLS

The key target bird in this group *used to be* THAYER'S GULL, but this has now been demoted to a subspecies of ICELAND GULL. The population of most GULLS peaks in late November, and none of the regular ones are particularly rare, the hardest being LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL. The place to find them is near the Trail Road landfill or spots on the Ottawa River. They like to roost on water or on the edge of ice as the ponds and river ice up.

FALL RARITIES

Although SONGBIRD migration is mostly finished by early October, many other species of birds have peak migration anywhere from early October to late November. This is the time when many rarities show up. While no particular rarity can be expected, it is certain that a few will show up every fall, and in 2017 there were six, although this may have been an exceptional year.

*American Coot at the Russell Sewage Lagoons, October 3, 2014.
Photo by Jacques Bouvier.*



Rarities in the fall show up for different reasons. One reason is that there are many young birds and some of them have migration problems.

In the case of some SONGBIRDS, the young may migrate in the wrong direction: north and east rather than south and west. In other cases, strong weather systems such as hurricanes literally blow the birds off course.

This may have been the case with the RAZORBILL and GANNET in 2017. In the case of SONGBIRDS, off-course or injured birds would have better luck surviving in warmer microclimates like

Britannia (BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER in 2017) or at a feeder. (In 2015 there was a SUMMER TANAGER at a feeder in New Edinburgh, and a BULLOCK'S ORIOLE in Pakenham feeding on apples). If these birds are in a popular area they are more likely to be observed. SONGBIRDS at feeders or in microclimates become trapped and unfortunately are not likely to survive our harsh winters. In the case of WATERBIRDS, the Ottawa River is the major corridor, and with all the observers, there is a good chance that any rare bird will be seen. The three other rarities that were around in the fall of 2017 were CAVE SWALLOW, ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD and YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD.

RETURN OF WINTER AND THE WINTER BIRDS

You just never know when winter will settle into Ottawa. We might get a green Christmas like in 2015, or snow and cold may be well-established by late November like in 2016. Generally by the end of November, many of the activities described in Part 1 can be



Female Anna's Hummingbird in Carleton Place, November 16, 2017, by Jacques Bouvier.



Red-bellied Woodpecker in Masson, November 3, 2010. Photo by Jacques Bouvier.

done until the end of the year. One exception is that there is very little flooding in the east in the fall so while there are large flocks, they can be in many fields rather than one mini-lake. The mix of winter birds is different each winter, so birds missed the previous winter may well be common. In particular, the WINTER FINCHES return (it is hoped), so if you missed many the previous winter (as many did), you have another chance. Populations build up especially through December, so you could truly get your last bird on the 31st of December.

THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Between December 15 and January 5, there are numerous Christmas Bird Counts in the region, the first being Ottawa-Gatineau. This can be an enjoyable social activity, and you get a chance to participate in “citizen science”. Aside from this, due to the significant scouting beforehand, intense activity during the count, and active efforts to encourage feeder owners to report their sightings, there is a good chance that some rarities will be discovered in this period. Be especially alert during this period and be prepared to chase the rarities. Even better, participate in one of the counts, and check out any potential areas for lingering birds, such as unfrozen areas of water like storm water outlets, or any feeders in your neighbourhood.

SUMMARY

I have made two tables which summarize the four articles, and should you choose to follow this approach, they will be useful for planning your birding for the year, suggesting both where to go and what to look for. These are summaries only, to avoid repetition and in order to make the tables more manageable. Please refer to the articles for details on the activities, and also the 1993 seasonal checklist, which is a goldmine for details on the habitat and week-by-week seasonal status (how common or rare) every bird is.

Female Mountain Bluebird near Richmond, December 11, 2015.

Photo by Jacques Bouvier.

This bird, a western bird rare in the east, was the first ever seen in the 50K and fortunately, many birders were able to see it.



TABLE 1 - CONTINUED												
Birding activities by week	JULY				AUGUST				SEPTEMBER			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1. Unfrozen parts of rivers												
2. Feeders, fruit-bearing trees												
3. Forests in the north	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	B
4. Forests in the south and Greenbelt	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	B
5. Agricultural areas outside of the city												
6. Hawk migration, especially the Greenland Road Hawkwatch												
7. Flooded areas, mostly in the east												
8. Ottawa River	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	A	A	A
9. Shorebird habitat				B	B	B	A	A	A	A	B	B
10. Migrant traps					B	B	A	A	A	A		
11. Marsh and wetlands	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A		
12. Grasslands, fields and open areas	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A				
13. Special micro-habitats: Carp Ridge, Mer Bleue, Constance Bay	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B			
14. Inland ponds	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	A	A	B
15. Britannia Point												
16. NELSON'S SPARROW habitat									B	A	A	B
17. Gull habitat									B	B	B	B
18. Christmas Bird Counts												
19. Owl Habitat	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	A

Description of “Birding activities by week” in Table 1:

1. **UNFROZEN PARTS OF RIVERS:** Visit the unfrozen parts of the rivers in winter.
2. **FEEDERS, FRUIT-BEARING TREES:** Visit local or OFNC-sponsored feeders and areas that have over-wintering fruit.
3. **FORESTS IN THE NORTH:** Visit the Eardley Escarpment and the larger tracts of forest in the north such as Gatineau Park and Lac La Blanche.
4. **FORESTS IN THE SOUTH AND GREENBELT:** Visit other large tracts of forest: Larose Forest (east), near Pakenham (west), the Marlborough Forest (south) and, closer to town, any of the Greenbelt areas.
5. **AGRICULTURAL AREAS:** Visit the agricultural areas outside of the city, particularly after a fresh manuring.
6. **GREENLAND ROAD (and other) HAWK MIGRATION HOTSPOTS:** Visit the Greenland Road Hawkwatch (best) or almost anywhere in the region when weather conditions are suitable.
7. **FLOODED AREAS.** Visit the flooded areas in the east in the spring during snow melt. Visit other areas (such as the Carp River Flood Plain) when conditions are suitable.
8. **OTTAWA RIVER:** Visit the Ottawa River regularly after it opens until freeze-up, most particularly between Britannia and Shirley’s Bay, and between Masson and Parc national de Plaisance.
9. **SHOREBIRD HABITAT:** Visit any suitable SHOREBIRD habitat: flooded fields, melting snow dumps (in spring), edges of inland ponds including storm water outlets, river edges and mudflats (such as Shirley’s Bay).
10. **MIGRANT TRAPS:** Visit migrant traps (like Britannia) repeatedly, or at least any decent-sized woodland.
11. **MARSH AND WETLANDS:** Visit extensive marshy/wetland areas, such as Constance Creek.
12. **GRASSLANDS, FIELDS AND OPEN AREAS:** Visit extensive areas of grassland such as Burnt Lands Provincial Park, fields and other open areas.
13. **SPECIAL HABITATS:** Visit certain special areas: Carp Ridge, Constance Creek, Torbolton Forest, and Mer Bleue (for nesting species).
14. **INLAND PONDS:** Visit inland ponds such as on Moodie Drive and Giroux Road.
15. **BRITANNIA POINT:** Visit Britannia Point when insects emerge from the river.
16. **NELSON’S SPARROW HABITAT:** Look for NELSON’S SPARROW in the phragmites on the Ottawa River from about Ottawa Beach to Constance Bay.
17. **GULL HABITAT:** This includes dumps, ploughed fields, and the Ottawa River. In the region, the only useful dump is Trail Road – the landfill in particular, and the surrounding ponds.
18. **CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS:** Participate in some local Christmas Bird Counts.
19. **OWL HABITAT:** Habitat and best times vary by species and no specific locations can be given.

Table 2: LIST OF ALL TARGET SPECIES, BY HABITAT AND SEASON

The following is a list of all the target species identified in the four articles, with their usual habitat and the usual time that you can expect to see them, which makes this a four-season table. It is a simplified list based on information presented in the 1993 seasonal checklist, and does not include all the nuances of habitat or a more precise listing of the ideal times. It is just intended as a rough guide for planning purposes. Refer to that checklist for a lot more detail. In case you are wondering, the habitats listed here do not have a one-to-one correspondence with my list of 19 activities, which are to some extent geographical places to go to, and these places may have multiple habitats.

There have been some minor changes from the first three articles, as I reconsidered what I thought were “target species”. Remember that “target species” includes only the relatively more difficult-to-find species, which we might define as being rare to uncommon, but that are normally seen every year in the 50K. Birds make this list for a number of reasons. There may be very few that show up each year, or there may be birds that are present in larger numbers but have a rather restricted habitat, are difficult to see or hear, or have a more restricted migration window. It excludes all the very rare species, which we define as species not found most years. Of course these are very desirable to find but we cannot predict where or when they will be found so we cannot specifically look for them. It also excludes all the fairly common to abundant species, birds which are found in large numbers or in many locations over a considerable period of time. In simple terms, in the process of trying to find the “target species”, you are almost certain to find the others.

TABLE 2	Main habitat of species	Best time to find (Legend page 247)			
Target species	See 1993 seasonal checklist for details	WI	SP	SU	FA
*SWAN, TUNDRA	Flooded fields		A		B
*SWAN, TRUMPETER	Carleton Place (late winter), wetlands		A		B
*GOOSE, GREATER WHITE-FRONTED	Flooded fields		A		B
GOOSE, CACKLING	Flooded fields		A		B
GOOSE, SNOW	Flooded fields		A		B
*GOOSE, ROSS’S	Flooded fields		A		B
BRANT	Ottawa River		B		A
*WIGEON, EURASIAN	Ottawa River, puddle duck habitat		B		A
*CANVASBACK	Ottawa River		B		A
REDHEAD	Ottawa River		A	B	A
*DUCK, HARLEQUIN	Ottawa River, Rideau River	A	B		A
DUCK, LONG-TAILED	Ottawa River		B		A
SCOTER, BLACK	Ottawa River				A
SCOTER, SURF	Ottawa River				A

TABLE 2 - Continued		Best time to find (Legend page 247)			
Target species	Main habitat of species	WI	SP	SU	FA
SCOTER, WHITE-WINGED	Ottawa River		B		A
GOLDENEYE, BARROW'S	Ottawa River, Rideau River	A	B		A
MERGANSEER, RED-BREASTED	Ottawa River		B		A
DUCK, RUDDY	Inland ponds, Ottawa River		A	A	A
*PARTRIDGE, GRAY	Grasslands, open areas	A	A	B	B
GROUSE, RUFFED	Forests in general	B	A	B	B
LOON, RED-THROATED	Ottawa River				A
GREBE, HORNED	Ottawa River		B		A
GREBE, RED-NECKED	Ottawa River		B		A
BITTERN, AMERICAN	Marsh and wetlands		A	A	B
*BITTERN, LEAST	Marsh and wetlands		A	A	B
*GOSHAWK, NORTHERN	Hawk migration, forests in general	B	A	B	A
HAWK, RED-SHOULDERED	Hawk migration, forests in general		A	A	B
HAWK, BROAD-WINGED	Hawk migration, forests in general		A	A	B
HAWK, ROUGH-LEGGED	Hawk migration, grassland and open areas	A	A		A
*EAGLE, GOLDEN	Hawk migration, Eardley Escarpment	A	A		A
RAIL, VIRGINIA	Marsh and wetlands		A	A	B
SORA	Marsh and wetlands		A	A	B
MOORHEN, COMMON	Marsh and wetlands		A	A	B
COOT, AMERICAN	Ottawa River, marsh and wetlands		B	B	A
CRANE, SANDHILL	Mer Bleue, open country		B		A
PLOVER, BLACK-BELLIED	Shorebird habitat, flooded fields		B		A
PLOVER, LESSER GOLDEN	Shorebird habitat, flooded fields				A
SANDPIPER, UPLAND	Grasslands and open areas		A	A	
*WHIMBREL	Ottawa River, shorebird habitat		A	B	A
*GODWIT, HUDSONIAN	Shorebird habitat		B		A
*GODWIT, MARBLED	Shorebird habitat		A		
*TURNSTONE, RUDDY	Ottawa River, shorebird Habitat		A		A
SANDPIPER, BAIRD'S	Shorebird habitat				A

TABLE 2 - Continued	Main habitat of species	Best time to find (Legend page 247)			
Target species	See 1993 seasonal checklist for details	WI	SP	SU	FA
*SANDPIPER, PURPLE	Ottawa River				A
SANDPIPER, STILT	Shorebird habitat				A
DOWITCHER, SHORT-BILLED	Shorebird habitat		B		A
DOWITCHER, LONG-BILLED	Shorebird habitat				A
WOODCOCK, AMERICAN	Open woodlands		A	A	B
PHALAROPE, WILSON'S	Shorebird habitat		A	B	A
PHALAROPE, RED-NECKED	Shorebird habitat		A		A
*JAEGER, PARASITIC	Ottawa River		B		A
*GULL, LITTLE	Ottawa River		A		
GULL, BONAPARTE'S	Gull habitat		A	B	A
GULL, LESSER BLACK-BACKED	Gull habitat		B		A
TERN, CASPIAN	Gull habitat		B	B	A
*TERN, ARCTIC	Gull habitat		A		
TERN, BLACK	Marsh and wetlands, Ottawa River		A	A	
CUCKOO, BLACK-BILLED	Open woodlands, brushy areas		A	A	
*CUCKOO, YELLOW-BILLED	Open woodlands, brushy areas		A	A	
SCREECH-OWL, EASTERN	Open woodlands	A	A	B	A
OWL, GREAT HORNED	Open woodlands	A	A	A	A
OWL, SNOWY	Grasslands and open areas	A	B		A
*HAWK-OWL, NORTHERN	Open woodlands	A	B		A
OWL, BARRED	Forests in general	A	A	A	A
*OWL, GREAT GRAY	Open woodlands	A	B		A
*OWL, LONG-EARED	Coniferous woodlands, Lowland woodlands	B	A	B	A
*OWL, SHORT-EARED	Grasslands and open areas	B	A	B	A
*OWL, BOREAL	Coniferous woodlands	A	A		A
OWL, NORTHERN SAW-WHET	Lowland forests	B	A		A
NIGHTHAWK, COMMON	Open woodlands, Carp Ridge		A	A	A
WHIP-POOR-WILL	Open woodlands, Carp Ridge		A	A	A
WOODPECKER, RED-HEADED	Special habitat: Torbolton Forest		A	A	

TABLE 2 - Continued	Main habitat of species	Best time to find (Legend page 247)			
Target species	See 1993 seasonal checklist for details	WI	SP	SU	FA
*WOODPECKER, RED-BELLIED	Feeding stations	A	A		A
*WOODPECKER, BLACK-BACKED	Burnt lands, coniferous woodlands	A	B		A
*GYRFALCON	Grasslands, open areas	A	A		A
*FLYCATCHER, OLIVE-SIDED	Migrant traps		A		A
*FLYCATCHER, YELLOW-BELLIED	Migrant traps		A		A
FLYCATCHER, WILLOW	Wetlands, brushy areas		A	A	B
SHRIKE, NORTHERN	Grasslands, open areas	A	A		A
VIREO, YELLOW-THROATED	Migrant traps		A	B	A
VIREO, PHILADELPHIA	Migrant traps		A	B	A
SWALLOW, NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED	Ottawa River, ponds		A	A	A
SWALLOW, BANK	Ottawa River, ponds		A	A	A
SWALLOW, CLIFF	Ottawa River, ponds		A	A	A
*TITMOUSE, TUFTED	Feeding stations	A	B		B
*WREN, CAROLINA	Feeding stations	A	B		B
*WREN, SEDGE	Wetlands		A	A	B
WREN, MARSH	Wetlands		A	A	A
*GNATCATCHER, BLUE-GRAY	Migrant traps		A	B	B
BLUEBIRD, EASTERN	Grasslands and open areas		A	A	A
*THRUSH, GRAY-CHEEKED	Migrant traps		B		A
*MOCKINGBIRD, NORTHERN	Brushy areas, fruit-bearing trees	A	A	A	A
WAXWING, BOHEMIAN	Fruit-bearing trees	A	A		A
*LONGSPUR, LAPLAND	Agricultural areas outside of the city	A	A		A
*WARBLER, GOLDEN-WINGED	Carp Ridge		A	A	
*WARBLER, ORANGE-CROWNED	Migrant traps		A		A
*WARBLER, CERULEAN	Deciduous forests, Champlain Lookout		A	B	

TABLE 2 - Continued	Main habitat of species	Best time to find (Legend page 247)			
Target species	See 1993 seasonal checklist for details	WI	SP	SU	FA
WATERTHRUSH, NORTHERN	Lowland forests		A	A	B
WARBLER, MOURNING	Lowland forests, open woodlands		A	A	B
WARBLER, WILSON'S	Migrant traps		A		A
WARBLER, CANADA	Wetlands, brushy areas		A	A	B
TOWHEE, RUFIOUS-SIDED	Brushy areas, Carp Ridge		A	A	B
SPARROW, CLAY- COLOURED	Brushy areas		A	A	B
SPARROW, VESPER	Grassland and open areas		A	A	
SPARROW, GRASSHOPPER	Grassland and open areas		A	A	
*SPARROW, NELSON'S	Special habitat: Ottawa River phragmites				A
SPARROW, FOX	Migrant traps		A		A
SPARROW, LINCOLN'S	Migrant traps, Mer Bleue		A	A	A
BLACKBIRD, RUSTY	Lowland forests		A		A
GROSBEAK, PINE	Coniferous woodlands, feeding stations	A	B		B
CROSSBILL, RED	Coniferous woodlands	A	B		B
CROSSBILL, WHITE-WINGED	Coniferous woodlands	A	B		B
REDPOLL, COMMON	Coniferous woodlands, feeding stations	A	B		B
REDPOLL, HOARY	Coniferous woodlands, feeding stations	A	B		B
SISKIN, PINE	Coniferous woodlands, feeding stations	A	B		B
GROSBEAK, EVENING	Coniferous woodlands, feeding stations	A	B		B

Legend to Table 2

*more difficult to find than the others	WI: Winter, late November to early march
A: best time	SP: Spring Migration, mid-March to early June
B: harder to find/identify but possible	SU: Summer nesting, mid-June to early August
No entry: never or rarely occurs	FA: fall migration, mid-August to mid- November

CLOSING REMARKS

There can never be the final word on birding in the 50K. Birds, knowledge and the landscape change. I hope that birding still will be a thriving hobby 40 years from now in the year 2058, and someone will write a new series of articles. Speculation on the birding tools that will be available then would be fascinating and probably not meaningful, but we can at least think about the changes to bird populations. Even as we speak, some species are expanding and others are declining. As an example in just this year, there have been a number of sightings of TRUMPETER SWAN away from their usual spots, so it may not be long before they are regular nesters in multiple locations all over the region. GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER may eventually stop nesting in the region, and BLUE-WINGED WARBLER may become more regular. What constitutes a “target species” is always a matter of opinion, but 40 years from now this list will certainly be different.

As always, good birding! 🐦

From the Editor: I would really like to thank and congratulate Gregory Zbitnew for writing this four-part series for Trail & Landscape. It's the core of Volume 52, and it means so much for T&L and for the OFNC.

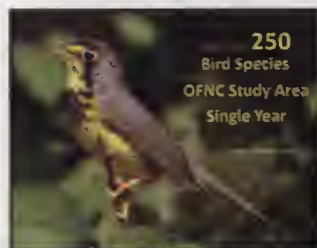
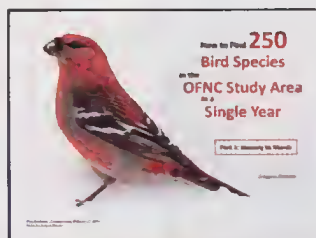
It all started in October 2017, when OFNC member Brian Daly wrote to Bernie Ladouceur and me to say that members might enjoy seeing a reprint or rewrite of the 1977 series, “How to See 200 Species of Birds in the Ottawa Area this Year.” Bernie immediately challenged Gregory: “How about 250?”

So I scanned and sent them the five articles from 1977 (T&L was published five times a year in those days), and we decided to follow the same format: for every issue of 2018, Gregory would describe the best locations to find target species, covering the same period of time as the issue in which each article appeared. The result is an excellent, contemporary tool, and the tables at the end of the fourth article are an absolute bonus.

Then there are the pictures! It was quite a treat to work with Jacques's photos and I must thank him as well. They added so much to the articles, and they allowed me to give the 2018 volume of T&L four beautiful covers.

I hope the series will help you achieve your birding goals. If you take up Gregory's challenge to find 250 species in a year, I'm sure OFNC members would love to read about it in T&L!

Annie



Eastern Cottontail

Linda Jeays


Sometimes a rabbit is pulled out
of a magician's black top hat,
but at other times one appears
simply because of the magical spell
cast over a wintry backyard garden
during the witching hours of night.

There is a trick of moonlight
which spreads dark, elongated
tree-shapes across the snow,
and the enchantment is so strong
that it is not surprising when
a cottontail, in silhouette, bounds
across the precarious icy surface,
like a performer in a shadow play.

Dreams dissolve in daylight
but if, when morning comes,
frosty trails and shallow imprints
bear witness to night's escapades,
then real magic distinguishes itself
from the conjurer's illusion.



Photo by Susan Lehmann



*A new record for
the City of Ottawa!
American Cancer-root
(Conopholis americana)
as seen in its early
flowering stage in the
western portion of the
Ottawa Greenbelt
on June 9, 2018.
Photo by Greg Lutick.*

American Cancer-root (*Conopholis americana*) in the Ottawa Greenbelt: New for the City of Ottawa

Greg Lutick

I recently observed American Cancer-root (*Conopholis americana* (L.) Wallr.), a member of the Broomrape family (Orobanchaceae), in the western portion of Ottawa's Greenbelt. This plant was previously unknown in Ottawa (Brunton 2005), and this occurrence also seems to be the only documented recent observation of the species in eastern Ontario, though there is documentation of it occurring in Gatineau Park in Quebec (National Capital Commission archives online, 2009). In Ontario, most records of *Conopholis americana* seem to be west of Lake Simcoe, throughout south western Ontario north through Manitoulin Island, with only a few isolated historical recorded observations east of that range (Brunton, 1980). The Quebec Biodiversity Atlas lists 24 known occurrences of the plant in Quebec (Tardif et al., 2005).

I came across it while on a general exploratory walk in July 2016. At that point, the Cancer-root was past the flowering stage. I didn't relocate the plant until the following year when it was well past flowering. This spring/summer (2018), I made a point of observing it in flower. Photos of it in various stages are included in this write-up.

The Ottawa specimen was found near the base of a mature Red Oak in a mature, dry Red Oak/Sugar Maple forest. The species has no chlorophyll and is parasitic on oak. For most of the year, the plant looks somewhat like a small stash of more or less upright White Pine cones and could be easily dismissed as a squirrel's old stash. The plants are pale brown or yellowish in flower but dark brown after flowering.



Just past flowering: July 2, 2016.
(Same location as the other photos.)
Photo by Greg Lutick.



Deteriorated "cones" on April 6, 2018.
Photo by Greg Lutick.

This specimen had 18 flowering stems in 2017. The remains of the "cones" were visible through to the following spring. The first observance of new plants in 2018 was on June 9, at which point it looked to have sprouted above soil level within the previous week and consisted of only three stalks. The 2018 sprouting occurred on the opposite side of the tree from that in 2017 but seems associated with the same tree.

Is this the only patch of Cancer-root in the City of Ottawa? Not likely. I would encourage field naturalists to be on the lookout for this curious plant, especially among mature, dry hardwoods – often with occurrences of Bitternut Hickory and White Ash, as well as Oak and Sugar Maple. The South March Highlands and Carp Ridge would be prime candidates for such patches. 🐾

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dan Brunton for the provision of background information and editing suggestions.

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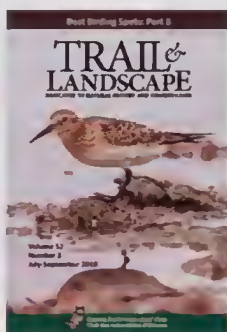
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Apache degeeri by Christine Hanrahan, from her article “Searching for the Planthopper, *Apache degeeri*, around Ottawa” in *T&L* 52(2), pages 120-123.



Coming Events

PLEASE NOTE:

The OFNC website (ofnc.ca) contains the most up-to-date information on events. Please check it regularly for additions or changes to events. The Club's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/groups/379992938552/) and Twitter account (@OttawaFieldNat) may also be used to announce last-minute changes to events.

Several events require participants to register. Please consult the details in the event description.

We expect to have several more events to offer that could not be finalized prior to the publication deadline for *Trail & Landscape*. These will be announced as soon as possible on the website. Other weather- and year-dependent events can only be announced at the last minute, via the website, Facebook and Twitter.

ALL OUTINGS:

Field trips to natural areas in our region and beyond take place all year round. OFNC events are for members only. Prospective members with interest in attending should contact the trip leader in advance. For some events, participation is limited and members will be given priority. All participants will be asked to sign a waiver. Times given for events are departure times. Please arrive earlier, as leaders start promptly. If you need a ride, please contact the leader.

Please bring a lunch on full-day trips and dress according to the weather forecast and activity. Please always wear long pants and closed-toe shoes. Binoculars and/or spotting scopes are essential on all birding trips. Unless otherwise stated, transportation will be by carpool.

MONTHLY MEETINGS:

Our monthly meetings are held in the K.W. Neatby Building, Salon B, at 960 Carling Avenue. There is ample free parking in the lot on the west side of Maple Drive by Carling Ave., immediately to the east of the main entrance to the Neatby Building. Monthly meetings are open to the general public.

EVENTS ORIENTED TO ALL AGES:

Kids are welcome on all of our trips. We highlight some hikes as "oriented to all ages" as these are most likely to be enjoyed by typical children. Depending on your child(ren)'s interests and stamina, please feel free to bring them along on any events. For events tailored to kids, check out the Macoun Field Club (<http://ofnc.ca/programs/macoun-field-club>).

Calling all Field Trip Leaders, Past, Present and Future

The OFNC has true wealth in members who have led, lead and will lead field trips for the Club. The Events Committee wishes to acknowledge and say thank you to all. With some of you we have fallen out of contact. Others of you we haven't yet met.

We invite you now to get in touch. Is there a field trip you'd like to lead? Do you have some new ideas about places to go within or near the Club's 50-km circle? Are there places we should visit where we haven't been in a while, or just somewhere you'd like to take people? Aspects of natural history you could introduce, re-introduce, expand upon or revisit? Make a proposal! Would you like to be an apprentice with an experienced leader, an assistant or a co-leader? Are you interested in leading field trips but don't know how to start? Would you like to help others who want to become field trip leaders? Field trips can take place any time of day or evening, any day of the week, any time of year. You could stand, sit, walk, roll, cycle, hike, ski, snowshoe, paddle or drive. Cover a little distance or a lot. Introduce a different way of sensing the natural world or a particular cultural approach. Enjoy the rain or avoid it. Field trips can be expert-led, collaborative explorations or something in between. They can also be paired with indoor talks or workshops.

The Events Committee chair is Jakob Mueller - jakobdmueller@outlook.com. Other members are Julia Cipriani - juliacip92@gmail.com, Owen Clarkin - wrecsvp@gmail.com, Elizabeth Robson Gordon - erobsongordon@gmail.com and Bev McBride - bm.ofnevents@gmail.com. Feel free to contact one of us.

We look forward to hearing from you, any time!



OFNC members during a field trip in Shaw Woods in 2015. Photo by Diane Lepage.

Monthly Meeting

STILL STANDING TALL: THE STORY OF RED SPRUCE IN EASTERN ONTARIO

Tuesday October 9

7:00 p.m. Social

7:30 p.m. Formal program

Speaker: Owen Clarkin

Location: Salon B,
K.W. Neatby Building,
Central Experimental Farm,
960 Carling Avenue

Description: Red Spruce (*Picea rubens*) is a long-lived climax-forest conifer tree and one of three spruces native to eastern Canada. Often

considered primarily a species of the Maritime provinces associated with the Acadian Forest Type, its presence in Ontario was confirmed relatively late, only in the mid-20th century. Despite subsequent recognized importance to the province's forestry industry and ecology, the population numbers and geographical distribution of Red Spruce in Ontario has been and largely still is a bit mysterious and under-studied.

One could reasonably claim that Red Spruce has been underappreciated to date: heavily cut for forestry from the 1950s onward and uncommonly replanted for reforestation or ornament, the remaining trees to be found today in the province are a small fraction of the historical population. However, factors of change ranging from climate to introduced pests of other kinds of trees indicate that the relative importance of Red Spruce to the natural ecosystem may be increasing as we look toward the future. It is time to get better acquainted with Red Spruce, and see what sets it apart from its better-known cousins White Spruce and Black Spruce (and for that matter, the exotic Norway and Blue Spruces).

We will explore the natural history of Red Spruce and its associated ecology in Ontario, with a focus on the Ottawa district, beginning with the history of the species in the province right up to the still evolving current picture.

Monthly meetings are open to the general public.



*A Red Spruce among other trees in the
Piperville area, east of Ottawa.*

Photo by Owen Clarkin.

Saturday October 20

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Rain or shine.

BRITANNIA CONSERVATION AREA WOODS – A FOREST PROFESSIONALS' VIEW

Leaders: CIF Ottawa Valley Section members Ken Farr and Nancy Young

Meet: Woods entrance on Cassels St. at the northwest corner of Mud Lake.

Description: Join members of the Canadian Institute of Forestry Ottawa Valley Section (<https://www.cif-ifc.org/>) on a walking tour of the Britannia Conservation Area (Mud Lake) woods. We'll look at the woods' characteristics, signs of its history and how it is responding to recent natural events.

To find the Britannia Conservation Area, take Highway 417 to Pinecrest Road (exit 129). Go north on Pinecrest, then turn right (east) onto Richmond Road. After Richmond crosses Carling Avenue, turn left (north) onto Poulin Avenue. Turn right onto Britannia Road and right on Cassels Street. Look for the woods entrance on your right. You can park along the road or in the four parking spots before the road enters the filtration plant grounds. For logistical questions beforehand, you may contact bm.ofnevents@gmail.com. We will be on flat, dirt trails, some of which are wide and possibly accessible to some wheeled devices, others less so. There are no public washrooms at this location.

Sunday October 28

8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

FALL BIRDING AT MER BLEUE AND THE RIDGE ROAD AREA

Leader: Richard Knapton

Location: Meet at NCC parking lot 21 on Ridge Rd. where it meets Anderson Rd. Take Highway 417 to exit 104 and proceed northwest on Anderson Rd. until you reach Ridge Rd.

Description: We will visit the Mer Bleue bog and other sites of interest in the area. Fall birding can produce late migrant songbirds, shorebirds, birds of prey, waterfowl and maybe Sandhill Cranes.

Be prepared for trail walking and some driving. Check the weather forecast and be prepared. Waterproof footwear is advisable. Bring water and a snack. You may send an email by October 24 to bm.ofnevents@gmail.com if you would like to be notified of cancellation due to weather. You may also contact that email address if you are unable to get to the meeting point on your own.



*Rough-legged Hawk at Mer Bleue,
Nov. 13, 2016, by Jakob Mueller.*

Saturday November 3
8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

WILD GOOSE CHASE!

Leaders: Tony Beck & Nina Stavlund

Meet: Petrie Island Causeway, north of intersection at Highway 17 and Trim Road (Orleans)

Description: In early November, most of our local agricultural fields have been harvested and cut. This provides open views from the roadside where birds are easily observed as they forage through the stubble. Although many will have already passed through, we'll still witness much evidence of migration. After a quick check of the Ottawa River for diving ducks, we'll drive through open country east of Ottawa looking for Sandhill Cranes, various geese, gulls and hawks. We'll check all flocks of waterfowl for unusual species like Ross's Goose or Greater White-fronted Goose. Recent late-fall migrations have produced thousands of Greater Snow Geese – an extremely impressive sight. While checking the Snow Geese, we hope to find a mega-rarity: Pink-footed Goose! Because we will be standing along busy roads, for safety reasons, the leaders request that only adults attend this event. The trip is also not suitable for accompanying pets (which is really the case for any naturalist outing). Also for safety reasons, participation is limited to the first 20 OFNC members who register. If you sign up but then cannot go, please let the leaders know so that someone else can take your place.

This trip will only be cancelled if we have severe weather conditions. Listen to the weather forecast and dress accordingly. We will try to have as few vehicles as possible so carpooling is encouraged. Bring binoculars and telescopes.

Contact the leaders if you have any questions or to register:

TonysAlwaysAnAdventure@gmail.com.

Photo: Geese in 2015 by Tony Beck.



Monthly Meeting

MARS - THE RED PLANET

Tuesday November 13

7:00 p.m. Social

7:30 p.m. Formal program

Speaker: Howard Simkover

Location: Salon B, K.W. Neatby Building, Central Experimental Farm,
960 Carling Avenue

Description: The planet Mars has always held a compelling fascination for humanity. For this reason, it has played a central role in ancient folklore, science fiction stories and modern astronomy. More has been written about Mars - both fact and fiction - than all the other planets combined. It is almost certain to be the first planet beyond the Earth visited by our species, perhaps within the next 30 years.

Howard Simkover was a Producer-Lecturer with the Montreal Planetarium for many years, and also spoke on astronomy in Ottawa at the National Museum of Science & Technology. In this highly visual presentation, he will share many perspectives about Mars - from the ancient Greeks, to science fiction tales of Martian invasions, to what we are experiencing of Mars through 21st-century spacecraft.

Monthly meetings are open to the general public.

Sunday November 25

1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

RAPTORS AND WINTER BIRDS

Leader: Sophie Roy

Meet: Eagleson Park & Ride (2A)

Description: During this outing we will be looking for raptors, gulls and other migrating birds. We will stop at multiple locations including the Trail Road Landfill and Rushmore Road. We will drive from location to location, with minimal walking at each stop. This is a rain or shine outing, so please dress for the weather conditions.



*Red-tailed Hawk on October 7, 2016.
Photo by Sophie Roy.*

Saturday December 1
9:30 a.m. to 12:30 a.m.

SHIRLEY'S BAY AREA EXPLORATION REVISITED

Leaders: Bev McBride and Dave Moore

Meet: NCC Parking Lot P1, by the picnic shelter near the shore. There is also parking on the east side of Rifle Range Road before you enter the waterfront parking lot. If you park there, it is a short walk toward the river to the meeting place. To get there, take Carling Avenue west from Moodie Drive. Turn right on Rifle Road (signs for Shirley's Bay). Parking lots are at the end of the road before the turn into the DND property.

Description: Come and see what has changed since our last visit six months ago in early June. We will walk around the various habitats of this interesting spot, including the river shoreline and nearby wooded areas. Be prepared to cover a few kilometres, slowly. Plants, birds, geology, along with other wildlife and human impacts are among the features worth checking out. Bring along your curiosity, knowledge (optional!) and favourite field observation gadgets and books. Rain or shine. Dress for the weather! Note: we will not be entering DND property or going on the dyke (causeway).



*OFNC members on the Shirley's Bay Area Exploration outing on June 2, 2018.
Photo by Dave Moore.*

Monthly Meeting

ON WITH THE BUTTER: A VISITING NATURALIST'S LOOK AT FASCINATING ICELAND

Tuesday December 11

7:00 p.m. Social

7:30 p.m. Formal program

Speaker: Bev McBride

Location: Salon B, K.W. Neatby Building, Central Experimental Farm, 960 Carling Avenue

Description: Iceland is a fish-shaped, volcanic island in the North Atlantic whose northern limit skims the Arctic Circle. Part of the spreading Mid-Atlantic Ridge, it makes the cheeky claim of being part North American continent and part Eurasian. It is geologically young, and remote, with a small human population that arrived relatively recently. Tourists come in droves, enticed by dramatically austere glacial and volcanic features, geothermally-heated bathing opportunities, northern lights and the pleasure of saying they've been there. Students of the natural sciences like it too, for many of the same reasons. Its flora and fauna reflect influences from early geologic times to the present. Warm ocean currents moderate the climate. It has no reptiles or amphibians, no bats and one native tree. It has some gorgeous ducks, butterflies only on migration, and two thrushes, both recent arrivals. It has hot-spring-loving snails. It has introduced species, some invasive, and at least one recent extinction. Its national flower is a common arctic-alpine species, one of many sending up bright flowers in the short summer. Landscapes range from alpine to heath to meadow to coastal, and some of them are steaming and bubbling. The marine environment is of course of great importance, paramount in the economy, and relatively biodiverse. Bev will offer some glimpses from a visiting tourist-naturalist-geographer's perspective.

Monthly meetings are open to the general public.



Scene from Bev's trip to Iceland. Photo by Dave Moore.

Monthly Meeting

140th ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

Tuesday January 8, 2019

7:00 p.m. Social

7:30 p.m. Formal program

Location: Salon B, K.W. Ncatby Building, Central Experimental Farm,
960 Carling Avenue

Description: The Board of Directors for 2019 will be elected at this meeting. There will be a brief review of the activities in 2018 and a statement of the Club's finances will be given. This is an opportunity to meet most of the Club's executives and the chairs of the various committees and to find out what makes your Club tick. An abbreviated presentation (details TBA) will follow the voting.

Monthly meetings are open to the general public.

ANY ARTICLES FOR *TRAIL & LANDSCAPE*?

Have you been on an interesting field trip or made some unusual observations?
Write up your thoughts and send them to *Trail & Landscape*!

DEADLINE: Material for the January-March issue must be in the editor's hands by **November 1, 2018**. Send your articles to:

Annie Bélair

annie.TandL@gmail.com

613-832-7802

Vous pouvez m'écrire en français également.

www.ofnc.ca

613-234-6767



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